

COLONIAL REPORTS—ANNUAL.

COLONIAL REPORTS

No. 1340.

SWAZILAND.

REPORT FOR 1926.

*For Reports for 1924 and 1925 see Nos. 1261 and 1307,  
respectively (Price 6d. each).*



LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses:  
Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2; 120, George Street, Edinburgh;  
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1927.

Price 6d. Net.

58-40-0-26.

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THE GOVERNMENT OF SWAZILAND  
REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1926

1926

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No. 1340.

### SWAZILAND.

#### ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT, 1926.\*

##### I.—Situation and Area.

Swaziland lies between the eastern slopes of the Drakensberg Mountains, which form the eastern border of the Transvaal, and the low-lying lands of northern Zululand and Portuguese East Africa.

It is bounded on the north, west, and south by the Transvaal, and on the east by Portuguese territory and Tongaland, now part of the Natal Province, and is about the size of Wales, its area being 6,704 square miles. A little more than one-third of the Territory is native area and the remainder is owned by Europeans.

##### DESCRIPTION.

The Territory is divided geographically into three longitudinal regions of roughly equal breadth, running from north to south, and known locally as the high, middle, and low or bush veld. The high veld portion adjoining the eastern Transvaal consists of mountains, part of the Drakensberg Range. These mountains rise in parts to an altitude of over 5,000 feet.

The middle veld is about 2,000 feet lower, while the bush veld, bounded on the east by the Ubombo Mountains, has a height of from 300 to 1,000 feet, rising on the Ubombo Mountains to 1,500 feet.

##### II.—History.

The Swazis are akin to the Zulu and other tribes of the south-eastern littoral. Up to about 100 years ago they occupied the country just north of the Pongolo River, but a hostile chief in their vicinity forced them farther north and, under their Chief Sobhuza, they then occupied the territory now known as Swaziland. This Chief, who died in 1839, was succeeded by Mswazi II. The further order of succession has been Ludonga, Mbandini, and Bhunu, whose son, Sobhuza II, was installed as Paramount Chief in 1921, after a long minority, during which his grandmother, Labotsibeni, acted as Regent.

\* In this Report the Financial Statements, which are for the year ended 31st March, 1927, are preliminary and not completely audited. All other details are for the calendar year 1926.

The many concessions granted by Mbandini necessitated some form of European control, notwithstanding that the independence of the Swazis had been guaranteed in the Conventions of 1881 and 1884, entered into between the Government of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria and the Government of the late South African Republic. In 1890, soon after the death of Mbandini, a Provisional Government was established, representative of the Swazis, the British and the South African Republic Governments. In 1894, under a Convention between the British and the South African Republic Governments, the latter was given powers of protection and administration, without incorporation, and Swaziland continued to be governed under this form of control until the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899.

In 1902, after the conclusion of hostilities in the Transvaal, a Special Commissioner took charge, and, under an Order in Council (1903), the Governor of the Transvaal administered the Territory, through a local officer, until the year 1907, when, under an Order in Council (1906), the High Commissioner assumed control and established the present form of administration. Prior to this, steps had been taken for the settlement of the concessions question by the definition of the boundaries of the land concessions and their partition between the concessionnaires and the natives. The boundaries of the mineral concessions were also defined and all monopoly concessions were expropriated. Title to property is therefore now clear. In this connection a case brought by the Paramount Chief has been dismissed, on appeal, by the Privy Council (1926).

In 1912, a Special Court was established with an Advocate of the Provincial Division of the Transvaal as President. The other members of the Court consist of the Resident Commissioner, the Deputy Resident Commissioner, and the Assistant Commissioners of the various districts. The Court holds sessions twice a year. All cases are dealt with by three members sitting without a jury. The Court has jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases.

An elected Advisory Council, representative of the Europeans, was established in 1921, to advise the Administration on purely European affairs.

### III.—General Events of the Year.

The High Commissioner, the Earl of Athlone, paid a visit to Mbabane during the year.

During the year there were 180 European emigrants and 212 immigrants, the latter being permanent settlers.

According to the census held on the 3rd May, 1921, the European population was 1,239 males and 996 females, totalling, 2,235 persons, i.e., an increase of 103.6 per cent. since the 1911 census. The native Bantu population was 52,761 males and 57,534

females, totalling, 110,295 persons, i.e., an increase of 5.34 per cent. since the 1911 census. Of this total 5,990 natives were recorded as being absent at labour centres outside Swaziland. Coloured and races other than Bantu had increased from 143 to 306 over the same period.

The general health of the community has been good. In the history of the Territory there has probably never been less malaria. Typhoid was less prevalent than in 1925. Syphilis has shown no abatement amongst the native population, but more voluntary cases were treated than usual, and treatment with novarsenobillon was commenced. Cases of all kinds admitted to the Mbabane Hospital numbered 252, and five deaths occurred; out-patients numbered 6,205.

The Mission Hospital at Bremerdorp is not yet fully equipped, but the Government-subsidized doctor and nurses there are doing good medical work amongst the natives.

The Mission Hospital at Mahamba under a Government-subsidized doctor is open, and during the latter half of the year 52 patients were admitted and 1,023 out-patients treated. This Hospital is near a thickly populated native area.

A Government Hospital is in course of erection at Hlatikulu, and will be in charge of the medical officer there.

The five native lepers sent to the Union Leper Institution at Pretoria have, notwithstanding all endeavours, declined to undergo treatment there and will be repatriated.

Natives desiring to enter into contracts as labourers on mines in the Union continued to take advantage of the deferred-pay system, the sum of £12,169 being paid out, as compared with £9,498 during 1925. The number of passes issued was 5,181 to recruited labourers, and 7,636 to those desiring to travel outside the Territory, and a further 3,275 passes were issued to Portuguese natives recruited by the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association.

### IV.—Government Finance.

The total Revenue for the year amounted to £92,090, being a surplus of £232 over the Estimate, and the total Expenditure to £111,835, showing an excess of £2,780 on the Estimates.

Ordinary Revenue and Expenditure for the year amounted to £86,677 and £85,471 respectively, as compared with £87,677 and £85,075 respectively in 1925-1926.

The Extraordinary Revenue and Expenditure during the year amounted to £5,413 and £26,364 respectively.

*Public Debt.*—This amounted to £55,000, made up as follows:—

(1) The Swaziland Consolidated Loan of £72,500 was reduced during 1923 by the repayment of a sum of £37,500. The Loan now amounts to the sum of £35,000, bearing interest

at 3½ per cent. per annum and repayable, through the medium of a Sinking Fund, within 19 years from the 1st April, 1924.

(2) The Swazi Nation Trust Fund, £20,000, bearing interest at 4 per cent. per annum.

*Assets and Liabilities*—On 31st March, 1927, liabilities exceeded assets by £51,222 19s. 2d., inclusive of the Swazi Nation Trust Fund mentioned above.

#### V.—Progress of Trade, Agriculture, and Industry.

##### TRADE.

During the year under review the volume of trade, except in grain, was very small. The native crops were not good. Sales of land were effected at fair prices.

No statistics of imports or exports are kept, as, by an agreement with the Government of the Union of South Africa, Swaziland is treated, for Customs purposes, as a part of the Union. Payments due to Swaziland are assessed on a fixed proportion of the total Customs collection of the Union in each year. The amounts so received by Swaziland during the last three financial years were as follows:—

1924-25	1925-26.	1926-27.
£12,633	£13,860	£14,052

The above amounts include collections in Swaziland during the last three financial years in respect of spirits and beer manufactured in the Union, as follows:—

1924-25.	1925-26.	1926-27.
£1,024	£1,225	£1,293

The imports consist principally of flour, sugar, groceries, hardware, clothing, boots, spirits, oils, farming implements, mining machinery, tools, and general kafir truck. Most of these goods are imported from wholesale dealers in the Union.

The following is a summary of the principal articles exported from Swaziland during the last three years:—

	Quantities in lb.			Value.		
	1924.	1925.	1926.	1924.	1925.	1926.
Cassiterite Tin ...	539,907	621,600	424,507	£59,082	£67,722	£52,947
Cotton (unginned) ...	373,370	430,000	565,000	£6,221	7,013	9,400
Cotton (ginned) ...	72,350	59,725	132,100	3,640	2,984	4,500
Hides... ...	33,644	38,360	135,000	1,298	1,038	3,940
Slaughter Oxen ...	4,478,400	4,681,600	3,334,200	£64,688	£36,759	£44,456
Tobacco ... ...	240,500	250,190	780,000	7,909	6,981	22,750
Bullion ... ...	376 oz.	1,308 oz.	1,510 oz.	1,693	5,558	6,342
Specie ... ...	—	—	—	2,164	5,339	8,600

##### CURRENCY AND BANKING.

The currency is British coin and coins of the late South African Republic, which are of similar denominations to the British. All such British and Transvaal coins are legal tender—in the case of gold coins, for payment of any amount; in the case of silver coins, for payment of an amount not exceeding forty shillings; and in the case of bronze coins, for payment of an amount not exceeding one shilling.

Barclay's Bank (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas) has branches at Mbabane and Hlatikulu. The amount on deposit at 31st March, 1927, at the Mbabane Branch was £29,431 as compared with £35,800 at 31st March, 1926.

The Bank also conducts Savings Bank business. The number of savings bank depositors at 31st March, 1927, at the Mbabane Branch was 72, with a total credit of £2,272, as compared with 111 and £2,551 for the previous year.

At five Post Offices in the Territory, Post Office Savings Bank business is conducted. At the 31st March, 1927, the depositors numbered 403, with a total credit of £1,903 as compared with 326 and £1,196 for the previous year.

At the Post Office Savings Bank interest at 3½ per cent. was allowed on ordinary accounts and 4 per cent. on certificate accounts. Interest was allowed at 4 per cent. for 12 months and 3½ per cent. for six months on fixed deposits at the savings bank of Barclay's Bank.

##### AGRICULTURE.

On the whole the year was a poor one for the farmers. Up to the end of December very little rain fell and in many places crops planted with the rains in September were a complete failure and had to be re-planted, in other parts no crops could be planted.

The maize crop was only about 50 per cent. of the normal. The average price ruling was 21s. a bag of 200 lb.

The cotton crop was fair, the acreage under this crop being approximately 6,000 acres. Although the quality of the lint was good the percentage of lint was small, the average being below 30 per cent.

Mr. R. C. Wood, the Cotton Specialist of the Empire Cotton Growing Corporation, carried out some very useful and instructive experiments in the selection of suitable seed, cotton pest control, and fertilizing. There is no doubt that the work Mr. Wood is doing will be of inestimable value not only to Swaziland but to South Africa generally.

During the year a Tobacco Instructor was appointed. This officer has had experience in tobacco growing and curing in the Transvaal and Rhodesia and the benefit of his advice is already noticeable. With proper methods of cultivation and curing there



Government grants are given to this school and to another school for coloured children at the Florence Mission in the Hlatikulu District, the average attendance at which was 28.

Boarding or transport bursaries at the rate of 5s. per child per week are paid by the Government for all European pupils whose parents are in poor circumstances and who reside three miles or more from a school.

In addition to the above, the various missions conduct schools and classes in connection with their mission work for natives. During the year the grant made to mission societies for this purpose was £1,000, the same as for 1925. The average attendance at these mission schools during the last three years was as follows:—

1924	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,532
1925	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,958
1926	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,065

A number of the more advanced native pupils, both boys and girls, are sent out every year to be trained in the Union, at Lovedale, Tiger Kloof, and other Institutes. The cost of tuition and board for these pupils, who number about 13, is paid from the Swazi National Fund, which was created, with the concurrence of the Swazi Chiefs, for purposes of direct benefit to the natives. Each native taxpayer is required by law to pay 2s. per annum to the Fund, the expenditure from which is under the control of the Government. Apart from the regular schools, the natives receive religious instruction from 16 religious bodies carrying on work in Swaziland at 206 different centres. The average attendance at these centres during the last three years was as follows:—

1924	...	...	...	...	...	...	9,743
1925	...	...	...	...	...	...	10,172
1926	...	...	...	...	...	...	11,160

#### VIII.—Climate.

The climate of the high veld has been likened to that of the south of France. The air is bracing and invigorating; light frost are prevalent during the months of June and July. The mean temperature in winter is about 60° Fahr. The summer is pleasantly warm, the mean temperature being about 75° Fahr. The rainfall is good, the average recorded at Mbabane over 23 years being 53·22 inches.

The middle veld is well watered by streams rising in the range on the west. Lying as it does some 2,000 feet below the mountains the summer temperature of this area is warm and humid, but in winter is cool and refreshing. The mean temperature in summer is 80° Fahr. and in winter 65° Fahr. Frost at times occurs in the valley streams, but it is seldom found elsewhere. The rainfall recorded at Bremersdorp over 24 years averages 33·70 inches.

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East of, and parallel to, the middle veld lies the bush veld, about 20 miles in width and running north and south through the whole area of the Territory. Many streams come down from the high veld and Drakensberg Range. These streams converge in the bush veld into five rivers. Except for these this area is not well watered. The rainfall recorded at Natalia Ranch over 12 years averages 25·48 inches.

The high veld is free from malaria, which is, however, prevalent in the low veld during some of the summer months. The malaria is not of a virulent type, and is easily avoided by taking the precautions ordinarily considered necessary in any sub-tropical country.

#### IX.—Communications.

##### ROADS.

There are good roads to Mbabane from Ermelo, 96 miles; Breyten, 85 miles; and Carolina, 82 miles; and there is a fairly good road from Mbabane to the Portuguese border, from which point to Delagoa Bay the road is very good. This route is largely made use of by motorists from the Transvaal during the winter months. The main port of entry for the southern portion of Swaziland is from Piet Retief, whence roads extend to Hlatikulu and Mankaiana. The main ports of entry for the northern portion of Swaziland are from Ermelo and Carolina, via Oshock, Barberton (by bridle-path), Hectorspruit, Komati Poort, and Gcba. The main roads have been improved by the introduction of piped culverts, but much remains to be done for the betterment of existing roads and improvements in communications generally, for which adequate funds have not been available.

##### POST, TELEGRAPH, AND TELEPHONE SERVICES.

These services are now, by agreement, under the control of the Postmaster-General of the Union, but are paid for from Swaziland funds.

*Post Offices.*—Proclamation No. 29 of 1916 extended to Swaziland, with certain exceptions, the provisions of the Post Office Administration Act, 1911, of the Union of South Africa. At the 31st March, 1927, there were the following post and telegraph offices in the Territory:—

Postal Agencies	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Post, Telegraph, and Telephone Agencies	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Postal Order Agencies	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Postal Order, Telegraph, and Telephone Agencies	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Telegraph Offices only	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Telephone Offices only	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Telegraph and Telephone Offices only	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Money Order, Savings Bank, Post, Telegraph, and Telephone Offices	...	...	...	...	...	...	5

*Mail Services.*—The following is a list of mail services in operation at 31st March, 1927:—

Route.	Times.		Conveyance.
	Weekly.	Hours.	
Breyten-Bremersdorp via Oshoek, Mbabane and Ezulwini.	2	10½	Motor.
Ezulwini-Malkerns	...	4	Foot.
Ezulwini-Malkerns	...	1	Pack donkey.
Bremersdorp-Stegi	...	2	Foot.
Bremersdorp-White Mbuluzi	...	3	Foot.
Stegi-Portuguese Border	...	2	Foot.
Mbabane-Forbes Reef	...	3	Foot.
Barberton-Piggs Peak	...	1	Foot.
Amsterdam-Sandhlana	...	2	Foot.
Piet Retief-Menkiana	...	2	Motor.
Piet Retief-Hlatikulu	...	2	Foot.
Hlatikulu-Mooihoek	...	2	Foot.
Dwaleni-Berbice	...	2	Foot.
Mhlotsheni-Berbice	...	2	Foot.
Hluti-Mhlotsheni	...	2	Cart and Foot.
Maloma-Mooihoek	...	2	Foot.

#### X.—Public Works.

Concrete weirs were built over the Black Mbuluzi, Mzimpofu, and Ngwavuma rivers. There were 128 miles of new telephone lines erected and 36 miles of existing lines duplicated. Ten repair gangs were employed on the roads.

L. J. PUTTICK,

Acting Government Secretary.

Mbabane, Swaziland,

1st June, 1927.